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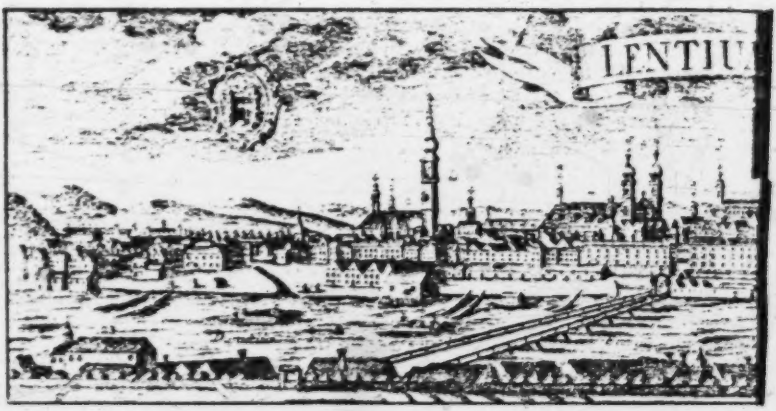

132 by raging storms. Here an early winter may often come to destroy the harvest, the fruit of bitter toil, and sweep away bridges and footpaths so that neighbour is isolated from neighbour.

361 At such times life is easier in the Upper Austrian towns—for instance, in Freistadt, the former frontier fortification north of Kefermarkt. Round the mediaeval town with its wide, turreted square lies a broad moat. On the wall which once defended the citadel whisper ancient lime-trees, casting their shadows over the children who play beneath them.

496 Not far from here runs the line between Linz and Budweis, the first "railway" line constructed on the continent of Europe, which unites the former Crown Lands of Bohemia to Upper Austria. In biedermeier times the citizens of Linz used to make excursions on this railway, travelling far into the country in horse-drawn railway carriages resembling post-coaches. These were in use for 40 years before the horse-drawn was replaced by the steam railway.

133 Up hill, down dale, sometimes in deep valleys, sometimes climbing up to the heights, the Mühlviertel, which has been called, not without reason, the "hunchback"-land, stretches further and further out towards the dim vastness of the Böhmerwald. At the foot of the Dreisesselberg, where Bavaria, Bohemia and Upper Austria meet, rises the broad Mühl from which the district takes its name, its golden-brown waters flowing on to the Prämenstratensian monastery of Schlögl. For many hours one can trace its meanderings through solitary mountain forests, following the sound of the woodsman's axe or the smoke of the charcoal-burners, where the grey wisps 288 float above the lofty crests of the pines. From courtyards and houses come the ● 248 muffled rhythm of hand-operated spinning wheels. Here flax is grown, spun and bleached.